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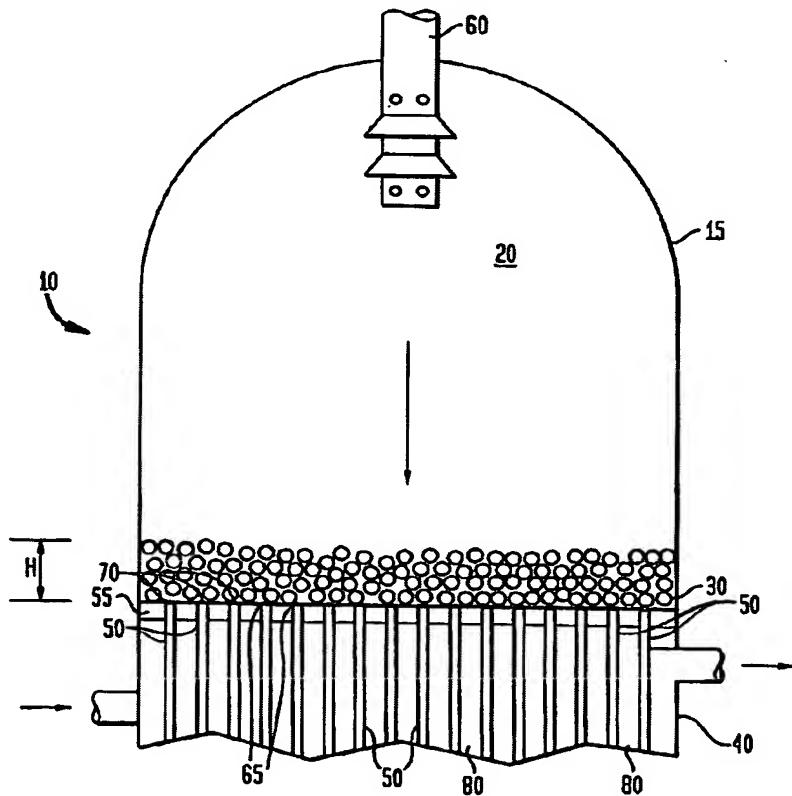
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**(54) Title: OXIDATION PROCESS AND REACTOR WITH MODIFIED FEED SYSTEM**



**(57) Abstract:** In an oxidation process in a shell and tube reactor (10), an improvement is disposing a short bed of packing material (30) about the tube (50) inlets. The short bed operates to direct contaminants derived from heat exchange media away from the headspace (20) and thus prevents formation of combustible gas mixtures.